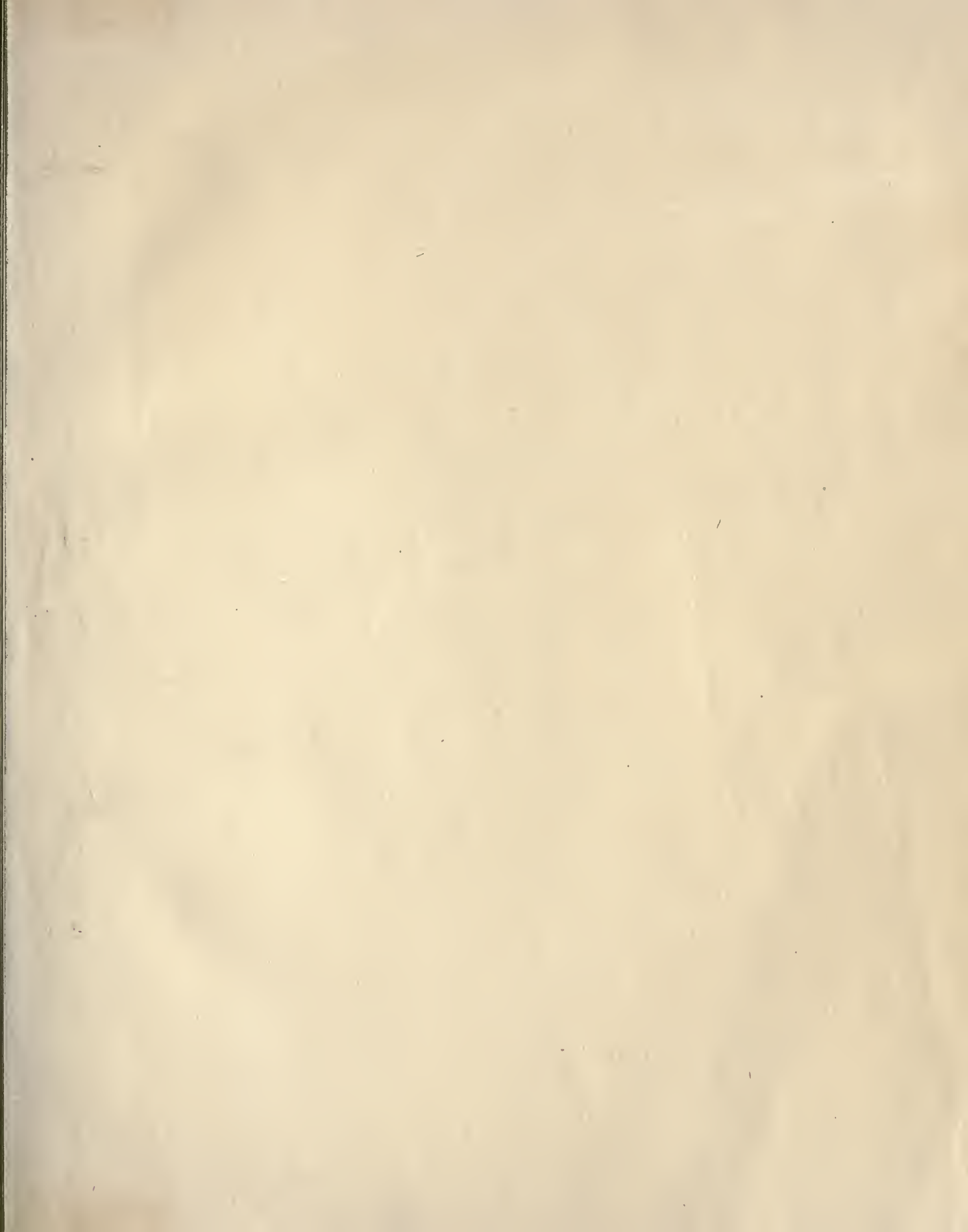




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THE
SORROWS OF WERTER:

A
P O E M.

THE
SORROWS OF WERTER:

A
P O E M.



BY
AMELIA PICKERING.

[1st Edition]

HERE LIES A YOUTH BORNE DOWN WITH LOVE AND CARE;
HE COULD NOT LONG HIS DELIA'S LOSS ABIDE:
JOY LEFT HIS BOSOM WITH THE PARTING FAIR;
AND WHEN HE DURST NO LONGER HOPE—HE DIED.

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TO THE

R E A D E R.

SHOULD some sweet nymph, perhaps, as Charlotte fair,
Read, without scorn, these pages of despair ;
Some happier Werter give the vacant hour,
To mark the woes of Love's destructive power ;
Ah ! let them pause on this display of woe :
O'er Werter's sorrows Pity's tears should flow :
Ah ! let them pause on this distressful tale :
O'er Werter's errors draw Oblivion's veil ;

Remember'd but to mark the fatal end,
Where Love's ungovern'd passions blindly tend :
To curb impatience ; better hopes impart ;
And point the moral to the feeling heart.
Though Honour plac'd in Werter's heart her throne ;
Though weeping Virtue mark'd him for her own ;
Nor Virtue's shield, nor Honour's arm could save
Love's wretched victim from an early grave.

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Robert Walpole, junior, Esq.
Thomas White, Esq.
Mr. R. White.
Mrs Western.

Miss Western.
Mr. Wood.
Mr. Ward.
Mrs. Which.
Mr. Withers.
Mr. Wills.
Mrs. Weddell.
Elbro. Woodcock, Esq.
Mrs Woodcock.
The Rev. Moses Wight.
The Rev. O. Wight.
Thomas Walfham, Esq.
Mrs. Walfham.
Miss Watfon.
Mrs. Webb, Binfield.
Miss Webb.
Mrs. West.
John Wilmot, Esq.
Mrs. Walker.
Mrs. Warren.
Mrs. Williams.
Mrs. Watfon.
Hankin Wall, Esq.
John Wells, Esq.
William Wells, Esq.
Mr. Willis.
Mr. Wormald.
Mr. J. Wormald.
William Walcot, Esq.
J. W. Esq.
Rev. Thomas Warton.
The Rev. Dr. Warton, Prebendary
of Winchester.
Mrs. Warton.

Mrs. Wray.
Mr. Winter.
Mrs. J. Warre.
Mrs. M. Woodford
Mr. Walker.
Rev. Mr. Webster.
Rev. Mr. Whalley.
Mrs. Wainwright, Hatton-Street.

Y.

Mrs. Young.
Lady Yates.
Miss Young.
Miss E. Young.
Miss S. Young.
Timothy Yeates, Esq.
Rev. Charles Yalden.

T H E
S O R R O W S O F W E R T E R .

L E T T E R I .

W E R T E R T O * * * * *

C O N T E N T and Peace have rear'd their quiet cell

Within the shades of Walheim's fair retreat :

Charm'd with their smiles, which know to charm so well,

Here, oh my friend, I fix my rustic seat.

B

Here

Here will I dwell beneath their gentle sway,
 Beneath yon branching olive's friendly shade :
 Welcome the calm these heavenly guests convey !
 Fair as their forms, but, ah !—as soon to fade.

Happy, thrice happy, whose untainted mind
 Delights to taste the pleasures of the plain ;
 Meets still enjoyment with retirement join'd,
 Nor scorns the pastimes of the lowly swain.

Soft on his senses breathes the fragrant May,
 Divinely radiant breaks the golden morn :
 Pure are his joys which blossom into day ;
 His humble roses bloom without a thorn.

Whilst I in these delights my hours employ,
 Ah, let not slander wound thy Werter's name ;
 Dead to the world, I ask no worldly joy ;
 If free from censure, I regard not fame.

The glorious wreath of war let others wear ;
 I seek not honours, wealth, or martial praise :
 To please one charming maid be all my care :
 Be hers the skill to mark my artless lays.

Yes, be it hers, secure in beauty's power,
 With smiles to chase her doubtful lover's sighs ;
 With sweet discourse to charm each happy hour,
 The soul of virtue beaming from her eyes.

Ab, where will love's unbounded passion lead

This ardent flame?—ah, whither does it tend?

To Charlotte all my fervent vows are paid;

To her my daily orisons ascend.

L E T T E R II.

T O T H E S A M E.

I B R E A T H E delight from Recollection's power,

Recalling days to me for ever gone:

Fled is the tender joy, the social hour;

And I, alas! am left to fight alone.

Hope gayly led me to Elysium's height,

The unknown prospect Fancy painted fair:

But, ah! too boldly daring was the flight!

For Disappointment lurk'd in ambush there.

There midst encircling woods she kept her seat
 Where flowers luxuriant scatter'd fragrance round ;
 Too careless I approach'd her close retreat :
 Deep in my hapless heart she fixt the wound.

Such is our fate, my friend, my hope's betray'd ;
 Yet, oh ! my heart, the mutmuring sigh restrain :
 'Tis Heaven's high will, and be that will obey'd ;
 Nor thou, poor injur'd sufferer, complain.

Life's fairest blossoms only bloom to die ;
 For one short morn rejoice in pleasure's fun :
 Chill evening comes—Ah, see, they withering lie !
 Ah, see ! how soon their course of beauty's run.

Alas! my friend, whence springs this sudden gloom?

Shall Albert's presence shade the smiling day?

Yes, yes; this favour'd lover seals my doom;

This destin'd husband bears my peace away.

L E T T E R III.

T O T H E S A M E.

WRITTEN ON WERTER'S RETURN FROM WAL-
HEIM TO THE CITY.

HOW sad, alas! how cheerless is my state!

Like some poor exile am I doom'd to rove;

Cut off from hope, abandon'd to my fate,

Expell'd from friendship, banish'd far from love.

Thy voice no longer, with affection's powers,

Sooths the keen anguish of my troubled breast;

Fled are those days, those fond remember'd hours,

The hours of friendship, once supremely blest.

Yes,

Yes, they are fled, and I, alas! remain
 A lonely outcast midst encircling joys;
 Constrain'd to mingle with the idly vain,
 Whose cold indifference all my bliss destroys.

For, ah, how few from pleasure's paths will stray,
 To trace the source whence inborn sorrows flow!
 Let them but trifle life's short hours away;
 They care not for the pangs my heart may know.

Vain, empty world, thy boasted good how frail!
 Thou, rigid school of misery and cares!
 The happiest find thee but a chequer'd vale,
 And oh! how many more a vale of tears!

Where sacred Friendship serves, a polish'd mask
 To veil Hypocrisy's distorted mien ;
 Where bright illusions in the sunbeams bask,
 And men and manners are not what they seem.

Ah, did no dangers meet our feeble eyes,
 How calmly smooth were Nature's fair extent !
 But rocks meet rocks, on mountains mountains rise,
 And man must labour o'er the steep ascent.

Yes, life's gay morning sinks in evening's gloom,
 The jealous clouds o'erhang the radiant light :
 Content's sweet roses feldom live to bloom,
 Or know perfection on ambition's height.

Our joys we measure by a moment's space,

By ages reckon when distress invades :

Panting and breathless run soft pleasure's race ;

Wearied with pain, lie down or seek the shades.

Oh, Death ! thy deepest shades around me spread ;

Would, would, thy axe were levell'd at the tree !

Would that in death were laid this weary head !

For light and life have now no joys for me.

Thou great Supreme, enthron'd on mercy's shrine,

Oh, hear, and bear me to thy peaceful shore !

Joys undiminish'd in thy presence shine,

“ At thy right hand are pleasures evermore.”

L E T T E R IV.

W E R T E R T O C H A R L O T T E.

WRITTEN FROM A COTTAGE WHERE HE HAD
TAKEN SHELTER FROM A STORM.

E S C A P ' D from scenes where noise and folly dwell,

From senseless mirth, heart-rending tumult free ;

Beneath this humble roof, this moss-grown cell,

I feel again restor'd to love and thee.

The snow descends, and thickens on the ground :

The winds against this peaceful shelter beat :

Yet while the storm is wild and loud around,

How sweet the calm that dwells in this retreat !

In this lone spot, midst these sequester'd shades,

Thy image, Charlotte, presses on my soul ;

Thy heavenly mildness every sense pervades,

Thy winning graces all my powers control.

Thus ever banish'd from my Charlotte's sight,

The poorest wretch on earth may pity me :

What is this life ?—a tedious winter's night :

Ah ! what my state, renounc'd by Heaven and thee ?

Why were those times, o'er which my memory strays,

Why were they once so fortunate and fair ?

'Twas that my grateful soul with humble praise

Resign'd to Providence each anxious care.

Still

Still that fame Providence benignant reigns ;

Creation smiles, unnumber'd worlds adore :

“ Nature still charms the sense of happier swains ;”

But, ah ! my heart can taste her charms no more !

All, all is past. Here wild Disorder reigns :

Each social joy from me for ever gone ;

The tyrant Love now holds my heart in chains,

And Reason abdicates her falling throne.

How sweet was once to me the early dawn !

Not to the lark more welcome was the sun :

“ I sprang to meet him on the upland lawn,”

And thought his daily course too swiftly run.

Now.

Now tow'rds the western hills he creeps so slow ;

I loath the fun, and chide his fluggard pace :

When morn returns—alas, it quickens woe :

Oh ! might I sink again in sleep's embrace !

“ Sleep, like the world, its ready visits makes

“ Where Fortune smiles,” where the horizon's clear ;

“ Swift on its downy” wings the wretch forsakes,

“ And lights on lids unfullied with a tear.”

Ah, pitying Heaven ! yet again restore

Those golden days when hope was in its prime :

Ye tender hours of love return once more,

Return and loiter to the end of time.

Oh !

Oh! that my sum of days, of months, and years,

Had all been crowded in that little space!

Or could, alas! my sighs, and streaming tears,

All thoughts, but those of happy love efface!

Why must I to ambitious hopes resort?

Why join the busy crowd, or madly go

Where Pleasure's sons in gay profusion sport,

And taste no joys but what from pleasure flow?

Ah, happier far an humble swain to dwell,

Blest with thy smiles, in this secure retreat!

With fond delight of sorrows past to tell,

To breathe my fervent passion at thy feet.

Ah,

Ah, no, my Charlotte, midst the city's gloom,
Chain'd to the oar, I yet must act my part :
To mix with strangers is my wretched doom ;
Strangers indeed to this devoted heart.

Methinks I live within a vast machine !
A pageant there whose strong deception charms ;
Where Folly governs still each varying scene,
And the light puppets bound to her alarms.

Amus'd, infected, midst the dazzling glare,
Awhile I sported in the mystic shew :
Till the first hand I touch'd, though seeming fair,
I felt was wood—I shrunk—and mine withdrew.

Ye airy flutterers in a summer's fun,
 Who glide like morning vapours from the fight;
 Say, were ye born to fill those scenes alone
 Whose paths are strew'd with rose-buds of delight?

Ye sportive race round Dissipation's shrine,
 Think—will not Time avenge his wasted hour?
 Shall he not come in majesty divine,
 Come, at the last, array'd in awful power?

Ah! what is *last*? Just Heaven! that word confounds
 My present sense, perplexes all the past:
 My weak conceptions strike not with its sounds,
 Not one idea will accord with *last*.

That

That Power supreme, who mark'd the destin'd line
Beyond whose bounds no human eye extends,
Was pleas'd, so dim our day of life should shine,
We scarce can trace where it begins or ends.

Dark hang the clouds of life's unhappy day,
With darker storms of sorrow yet to come :
Weary and sickening Fancy dies away,
While Hope almost expires upon her tomb.

Fainting she lifts her closing eyes above,
And points my wishes to a happier shore ;
To the pure fountain of eternal love,
Where Care's pale image shall intrude no more.

The sun is sunk beneath the western sky,

The moon begins her empire to assume :

Time warns me from this peaceful scene to fly,

Alas ! it warns me to my prison's gloom.

While Albert—Ah, too lovely Charlotte, say !

Say ! hast thou crown'd him sovereign of thy fate ?

Hast thou ?—Yet, oh ! the dreaded truth delay,

'Tis Werter's sentence—can it come too late ?

L E T T E R V.

C H A R L O T T E T O W E R T E R.

A H, restless mortal!—had I bid thee die,
And bathed the mandate with my flowing tears,
Then hadst thou blest me with thy parting sigh,
Hadst died a martyr to unmanly fears.

But when I sooth thy pains, and bring relief;
To hope and peace direct thy drooping views;
Canst thou then yield, so poorly yield to grief,
And all my fond solicitude refuse?

Oh!

Oh! I can feel, too exquisitely feel ;
 This heart too near to feeling is allied :
 Yet would I veil, its sweetest charms conceal,
 Ere they should Reason's better judgment guide.

Yes, I can weep ; sad sympathy is mine :
 But is that friendship worth the pitying tear,
 Which seeks on Sorrow's bosom to recline,
 And falls a willing victim to Despair ?

Friendship has hopes which light a brighter flame,
 Hopes I will cherish with a fond delight :
 Chase then her fears, those foes to honest fame,
 And give Activity her scope for flight.

Oh, Werter ! shake this palsy from thy mind :

Yet rise superior to depression's power :

Still let defeat, with patient courage join'd,

Rival the glory of the victor's hour.

Seek not the gloomy confines of despair,

The dreary caverns of desponding wiles :

Cease with the world to wage unequal war,

Nor turn indignant from her offer'd smiles.

This world's injustice man has oft arraign'd ;

Complaining still while privileg'd to live :

Learn to despise the injury sustain'd ;

And with a Christian charity forgive.

The hour of death is hasten'd or delay'd

By him alone who best discerns our good :

Cease then, ah cease, his wisdom to upbraid,

Too oft arraign'd, too little understood.

L E T T E R VI.

W E R T E R T O * * * * *

WRITTEN ON A VISIT TO THE PLACE OF HIS
BIRTH.

WHILST with the fervour of a pilgrim's zeal
On these my native plains I fondly stand,
More soft emotions o'er my senses steal
Than meet the faint within the holy land.

Whilst with his zeal I view these hallow'd bowers,
How does the well-known prospect charm my soul!
My heart expands beyond expression's powers;
Beyond the force of reason to control.

E

When

When at the close of each declining day,
Marking the object of my wishes nigh,
Through the long vale I homeward bent my way,
The welcome cottage met my longing eye.

“ My dog, the faithful guardian of its gate,”
With eager haste to greet his master flew ;
The favourite subject of my little state,
By love distinguish'd from the chosen few.

Ah, stealing Time ! full many a passing year
Has lightly floated with thy rapid tide,
Since Fortune drew me from this humble sphere,
O'er dangerous heights my sanguine steps to guide.

Oh! how these scenes recal each happy hour,
 Each fond endearment safe by memory stor'd!
 Safe from the stretch of Fortune's fickle power,
 Lock'd in these groves so blooming, so ador'd.

Behold where, planted by these partial hands,
 The roses mingled with the woodbines grow!
 Behold where yonder weeping willow stands!
 Hail, thou sad emblem of poor Werter's woe!

Where'er I pause, and, pensive, look around,
 Remembrance wakens all her busy train;
 Here sportive childhood lightly press'd the ground;
 Here once did Pleasure hold her golden reign.

Here would she loiter by the tinkling rill,
Or gayly tripping o'er the cowslip bed,
Gaze with delight on yonder busy mill :
These were her haunts, but these, alas ! I fled.

Oh, ever dear Remembrance ! guide my way
Through the lov'd mazes of each youthful scene :
Thou too, gay Fancy, hither freely stray ;
Come, thou delusive, visionary queen.

Come, let us range the verdant meads along,
Those feats of careless innocence and ease ;
Retrace once more, the sportive vales among,
Those tender years when every sport could please.

Sweet

Sweet to the sense arose the fanning gale,
 Whilst sweeter blossoms scatter'd fragrance wide :
 Simplicity adorn'd the lonely dale,
 With white-rob'd Decency, her modest guide.

Youth's sprightly morn its genial influence shed,
 Fondly exulting in the years to come ;
 Health's ruddy grace these glowing cheeks o'erspread,
 While smiling Pleasure dimpled in their bloom.

Ye lofty pines encircling yonder towers ;
 Ye crystal streams that murmur as ye flow ;
 Ye verdant plains, ye ever sacred bowers,
 Ah, why did I your chaste delights forego ?

How

How oft beneath yon spreading walnut's shade
The term, the object of my bounded view,
In happy ignorance I carelefs laid,
Fixt on a world I then fo little knew !

How on that world did Expectation lean,
In brighteft colours painting every charm ;
Whilst Fancy's glow ftill rais'd the dazzling fcene,
How did its glare my youthful bofom warm !

Bane to my peace ! the phantom I purfued ;
But, oh ! too foon the fatal change I mourn'd :
From that ideal world fo fondly view'd,
Ye halcyon fhades, how loft am I return'd !

Sweet peace of mind, oh, whither art thou fled?

From thy pure source shall joys no longer flow?

Must Disappointment raise her hydra head,

And every fancied bliss prove real woe?

Alas! how soon the flowers of life decay!

Bloom with the morn, and with the evening close!

Or should they yet survive a longer day,

How little fruit to fair perfection grows!

Why of that little are we then profuse?

Why cast with lavish hand its bloom away?

For oh, my friend! ere well we mark its use,

The fairest fruit is hastening to decay.

Such

Such is the destiny of man on earth,
Awhile he's borne on Hope's expanded wing;
Fair as the bud his tender youth puts forth
In all the soft luxuriance of spring.

But see! th' indignant sky unfriendly lowers,
See! blasts destructive poison young desire;
Wait but the change of some few fleeting hours,
And all his hopes, his promis'd joys expire.

Ye sylvan shades, here could I ever rest!
Yet I again must leave your peaceful plains;
Again return, to be again distress'd;
Thus stern Ambition holds the world in chains.

Yet

Yet 'tis not pomp, nor prouder learning's force,
 Can mark our destiny in future fate ;
 No, 'tis the *mind* ; from whence derives its source
 Each virtuous deed, whate'er is good and great.

I prize that *mind* beyond or wealth, or fame ;
 Beyond what knowledge, or what arts bestow :
 'Tis my fond boast : It is my only claim :
 The worth of knowledge all with me may know.

But ah, vain boast ! its fairest claim is lost !
 A wounded temper sickens in distaste :
 By love undone, by disappointment crost,
 My mind is now, alas ! a ruin'd waste.

Why was I mark'd love's hapless pangs to know ?

Why must my heart in ceaseless anguish groan ?

That heart which bled at each recited woe,

How shall its tender frame endure its own ?

Oh, thou all glorious Sun who rul'st the day !

Unchang'd since first the race of time began ;

In quick succession hastening to decay,

Thou hast beheld the fleeting life of man.

One generation hails thy cheering light,

Then fast declining, as a shadow speeds ;

Another rising sinks again in night,

And still another in its turn succeeds.

Alas,

Alas, bright orb! there yet will come a day,

Stupendous thought! when thou no more shalt rise:

The globe itself shall then dissolve away;

Thick darkness cover earth, and veil the skies.

That word which form'd the world, that powerful word

Again shall shake this universal frame:

But thou shalt never change, Almighty Lord!

Eternal Father! Thou art still the same.

L E T T E R VII.

W E R T E R T O C H A R L O T T E .

I N vain I seek from change of place to find

A change to thought; an antidote to care:

Still this unhappy, self-destroying mind

With cruel energy pursues me there.

In vain I seek by absence to remove

Thy beauteous form impress'd upon my heart:

Love still triumphant, all subduing Love

Derides my flight, and claims the conqueror's part.

Why

Why then, ah, wherefore should I wand'ring mourn

A wretched fugitive from pole to pole?

No—like the patriarch's dove will I return

To thee, my Charlotte, magnet of my soul.

L E T T E R VIII.

W E R T E R T O * * * * *

TORTUR'D in absence, hopeless of relief,
 I seek those shades from whence so late I came ;
 With vain regret, and fond enduring grief,
 Like some poor moth, I hover round the flame.

So weak is man, his best resolves so frail,
 So short the date of Reason's boasted sway ;
 When Passion, Love, or Folly's varying gale
 Shall sweep the mental monitor away !

The stricken deer with sighs and shortening breath
 Seeks thro' sequester'd wilds and paths to go :
 Thus I, alas ! invoking Peace and Death,
 Unpitied bear my solitary woe.

Thy groves, oh Walheim ! bloom with peace alone,
 For Charlotte consecrates thy sweet retreat :
 There will I dwell unknowing and unknown,
 There cast my mournful numbers at her feet.

There from the world, and all its follies free,
 With many a pang of hopeless love oppress'd,
 This throbbing bosom, like a troubled sea,
 Hush'd to a calm, shall rock itself to rest.

L E T T E R IX.

T O T H E S A M E.

T H E clock proclaims in flow and solemn strains

A long farewell to the departing year ;

One hour alone, one little hour remains—

Reflection whispers what I blush to hear.

Oh ! let me seize the moments ere they fly,

For all our fleeting years shall quickly end :

Swift as they pass then, I'll the hours apply

To contemplation, reason, and my friend.

Time,

Time, like the silent plunderer of night,
Makes on our little hoard some hourly theft ;
Shall we then, dazzled by life's glaring light,
Hope to endure till of each hope bereft ?

The tree, when stripp'd by hoary Winter's hand,
Again may bloom, again rich foliage bring ;
The grass which dies, and naked leaves the land,
Again revive with the returning spring.

But man, weak man, his transient season o'er,
Falls to be mingled with his kindred clay ;
In dust he slumbers to awake no more,
Till earth and heaven shall dissolve away.

Thoufands are cherifh'd but to breathe and die ;

So near allied the cradle and the tomb.

Thoufands who live, but live to infamy,

Degrade exiftence, and provoke their doom.

Yet Heaven is juft, eternal goodnefs fure :

Unerring Wisdom ftamps each fair defign.

Oh ! let us then with humble hope endure,

Revere his will, nor impioufly repine.

Alas ! the change a few fhort months have made !

How fwiftly is my youthful vigour flown !

Sloth and dull lethargy my powers invade,

And all the energy of life is gone.

Nature's sweet aspect can delight no more ;

No more her charms re-animate this frame :

The dazzling world's resplendency is o'er,

The sun's bright lustre is no more the same.

Where then, ah, where is life's attractive charm,

That active spring whose nervous force impels ?

Farewel at once to hope's delusive calm !

When peace no longer centres in ourselves.

Hard 'tis to combat with the ocean's tide,

But harder still 'gainst passion's force to move :

Come then, my friend, this shatter'd vessel guide,

And save it from the dangerous rocks of love.

L E T T E R X.

W E R T E R t o A L B E R T.

O N H I S M A R R I A G E.

HA I L, Albert! hail! may blessings wait my friend!

The best of blessings in thy charming bride!

Oh! may propitious Heaven thy blifs extend,

And grant thee every good, to me denied!

Night's gloomy horrors darken all my soul;

Restless I dream, I rave, and wildly start:

Repose still flies, disdainful of control;

No hope enlightens now my cheerless heart.

Despair,

Despair, and woe, and wild distraction reigns ;

I droop and wither in life's early bloom :

I struggling fight to break these galling chains,

And sink to peaceful slumber in the tomb.

Be Werter's sorrows all forgotten there,

Save, that remembrance lives in Charlotte's heart—

Ah, yet allow me in that heart to share,

To share with thee, at least, soft pity's part.

Oh, Albert, Albert ! make that angel blest ;

So may domestic joys around thee dwell !

While I, an outcast, lost to peace and rest,

To thee and Walheim bid a long farewell.

L E T-

L E T T E R X I.

W E R T E R T O * * * * *

—“ I MUST depart.”——Ah, my prophetic friend !

How apt the phrase, how fitted to my heart !

Yes—’tis resolv’d—thy summons I attend ;

Better, far better ’tis, I should depart.

But not to listen to ambition’s lore,

Nor yet thro’ folly’s beaten paths to stray ;

Now do I hasten tow’rds a calmer shore—

My chosen journey points a safer way.

And

And wilt thou come my doubtful course to steer ?

Wilt thou repair thy weary friend to meet ?

Yet pause awhile : thy promis'd aid defer

Till next my pen thy friendly care shall greet.

Pluck not the fruit too early from the spray,

Ere the meridian sun mature its bloom :

Another week, perchance another day,

May fill the ripening cluster's rich perfume.

Another day,—and fate's dire web is spun :

My soul grows sick, tir'd Nature seeks repose :

Ere the next dawn of yon declining sun

These eyes to life, and all its ills, shall close.

But, oh! maternal anguish wrings my heart:

A mother's sorrows agonize my breast.

Ah! haste my friend, and with each soothing art

Calm thou the mourner's troubled soul to rest.

Implore a blessing on her parting son,

Move her to pity, to forgiveness move:

Sure I was born to weigh destruction down,

And heap distress on all I fondly love.

Full is the measure of poor Werter's woes;

Thou rapid tide of grief, ah, cease to swell!

Alas! my cup of bitterness o'erflows:

Yet—peace my soul—for all may yet be well.

“ Peace

“ Peace fits on high, and smiling mocks mankind ;”

Oh, thou Supreme! I thank thee for the view ;

Thank thee who gave to my distracted mind

Thro' death the lovely phantom to pursue.

Yes, I'm prepar'd, I grasp the chilling steel ;

Farewel, my friend ! may every joy be thine !

Or, if some mingled sorrows thou must feel,

Oh, may those sorrows never equal mine !

L E T T E R XII.

W E R T E R T O C H A R L O T T E.

Y E S, I muſt die—yes—it is ſo decreed :

Theſe eyes ſhall not behold to-morrow's fun.

Oh, my foul's treaſure! oh, forgive the deed!

Charlotte is wed;—and Werter is undone.

Oh! hadſt thou bleſt me with a parting ſigh,

Hadſt thou in pity breath'd one laſt adieu;

Though doom'd to ſuffer, though reſolv'd to die,

My foul had once more known where comfort grew.

Would,

Would, would, alas, life's tedious dream were o'er!

Would that these eyes were clos'd in peaceful rest!

Yes, my lov'd Charlotte, 'tis a dream, no more;

An idle dream which but deludes at best.

Religion's sacred truths my soul reveres;

Respects the holy joys her laws impart:

That angel-voice which dries affliction's tears;

That godlike-hand which binds the broken heart.

Yet, oh! to death I fly a willing slave;

Hail the dread king, his icy sceptre fold:

Though trembling Nature shudders at the grave,

So dark that awful grave,—so deep,—so cold.

Yes, thou all-conquering power, to thee I fly—

Let thy cold bosom give my sorrows room :

Wearied with life, 'tis happiness to die :

Welcome the solemn silence of the tomb.

Ah, coward Nature ! wherefore dost thou fear ?

Why cling so close to life's tempestuous shore ?

Oh ! break the ten-fold cord which binds thee here,

And, wing'd with hope, to happier regions soar.

Far, far above yon distant orbs aspire ;

For soon, my soul, unfetter'd shalt thou be :

Yes, heavenly inmate, yes, thou vital fire,

I'll give thee freedom, if thou dar'st be free.

Then

Then farewell hope! delusive source of woe!

Despair has arm'd me for a firmer part:

One painful struggle, one decisive blow,

Cures all the sorrows of this bleeding heart.

Should'st thou, my Charlotte, chance thy way to bend

Where oft delighted we together stray'd;

Give all thy thoughts, thy sorrows to a friend,

By love, alas! but not by thee, betray'd.

And when at eve the sun's declining rays

Gild the proud summit of yon mountain's brow,

Think on thy Werter's once enraptur'd days;

Ah! think, my Charlotte, what is Werter now.

O'er each affecting scene let memory rove ;

Trace back my soft attention, tender fears ;

Oh ! let it paint a too impassion'd love,

By broken sighs express'd, or falling tears.

Yet, my lov'd Charlotte, yonder humble grave

Demands a tribute from thy streaming eyes.

See, to the wind those slender poppies wave,

And mark the spot where wretched Werter lies.

May some fond lines record thy lover's name ;

Let not his noble passion lie conceal'd :

He boasts no honours ; love was all his fame ;

To future ages be that love reveal'd.

Yes, thou wilt weep; thy tender heart will bleed

While thy flow steps approach thy lover's tomb;

Yes, thou wilt reprobate the fatal deed;

But Charlotte's tears shall consecrate his doom.

Those gentle tears outweigh the pomp of art,

“The blaze of heraldry,” the trump of praise:

To reign one hour in that angelic heart,

Exceeds the proudest trophies Fame could raise.

Oh! I was calm as evening's silent hours

When first I touch'd upon this tender theme;

But sad remembrance wakens nature's powers,

And now my tears from bitter anguish stream.

Flow ye soft drops, as summer dews descend
 Refreshing earth, so blest my burning heart :
 In its last struggles all your softness blend,
 And sooth, oh sooth my soul ere it depart.

Alas! I am not mad; I do not rave :
 No, Charlotte, while I breathe this last adieu,
 I see existence dawn beyond the grave,
 Existence in eternity with you.

Blest be that hope, which gilds my parting day,
 I'll hail the cherub with my latest breath,
 Whose beam refulgent darts so bright a ray,
 It cheers the dreary path which leads to death.

Say !

Say ! should some prodigal repentant son

Before his injur'd father's throne appear ;

Fall on his neck, and own himself undone ;

Would he not kiss away the conscious tear ?

“ Father forgive,” he cries, “ the shameful deed ;

“ Forgive thy erring child yet once again :” —

Though there he cease, still Nature's voice shall plead ;

Oh, ye affections ! can she plead in vain ?

And wilt thou, heavenly Father, seal my woe,

Should I appear before the destin'd time ?

'Scap'd from my weary pilgrimage below,

Wilt thou expel me from thy heavenly clime ?

When dumb confusion veils the timid eye ;

When blushing penitence these cheeks o'erspread ;

Oh, thou Omnipotent ! who reign'ft on high,

Arm not thy thunders 'gainft this guilty head.

Thou, God ador'd ! almighty King of Heaven !

Mercy, eternal Lord ! is thine alone ;

Oh, thro' that mercy be my crime forgiven,

When I for judgment ftand before thy throne !

Charlotte farewel ! yet *we* ftall meet again ;

My mind grows calm—the dreadful ftuggle's o'er—

Farewel, thou world of mifery and pain !

Pafs one ftort hour, and—Werter is no more.

L E T T E R X I I I .

C H A R L O T T E t o L O U I S A .

TH E scene is clos'd ; hark ! hark ! yon awful bell !

Those solemn sounds the horrid act proclaim :

Why, my Louisa, do I live to tell ?

Ah, why to tremble thus at Werter's name ?

Where were ye fled in that distressful hour,

Ye guardians of our fate, angelic band ?

Some dæmon fure usurp'd your sacred power,

Deceiv'd his heart, and arm'd his desperate hand.

Oh Werter! did fallacious Reason dare

Give strength or colour to the frantic deed?

Could such false gloss thy generous soul ensnare?

Could such delusion with thy mind succeed?

Could'st thou renounce Religion's holy cause?

The bright reward to suffering Virtue given?

Could'st thou break through the first of Nature's laws,

And brave the justice of offended Heaven?

Misguided youth! alas! what peaceful throne,

What crown of glory, or what fair applause,

Awaits the conduct of that rebel son,

Who dares to trample on a father's laws?

A son committed by his awful word
 To distant regions for some noble end ;
 On whose obedience to the fovereign Lord,
 The future fate of thousands may depend.

Say ! shall he fly, nor manfully abide
 When threat'ning dangers meet him on the way ?
 Impell'd by passion's force, urg'd on by pride,
 Shall his example teach the rest to stray ?

Tho' Virtue warn him from the guilty choice,
 Tho' still she strive his erring steps to guide ;
 Shall he indignant flight the heavenly voice,
 And thrust the gentle monitor aside ?

Shall

Shall he, regardless of the sacred trust,

Desert his station in the doubtful strife?

Remember, man;—thy great Creator's just:

Oh, dread the sentence of the Lord of life.

“ My son, I call'd not; whence this rude appeal?

“ Say! is thy course on earth so swiftly run?

“ Hast thou fulfill'd my will, and prov'd thy zeal?

“ Ah, rather say that will is left undone.

“ Say, that, impatient of my chastening hand,

“ On bold presumption's venturous pinions borne,

“ Thou'ft leap'd my bounds, defied my loud command,

“ And rashly plung'd from whence there's no return?

“ Straight

“ Straight was the path, which mark'd thy destin'd way,

“ Direct as Truth's unerring line could guide ;

“ I freely gave thee Faith's enlightening ray,

“ And bade Religion o'er thy steps preside.

“ I gave thee talents to distinguish right ;

“ I gave thee hope, to point a happier home :

“ My word resounded from the realms of light :

“ Endure ; be firm ;—for thou shalt overcome.

“ Why then, ah why, hast thou renounc'd my care ?

“ Why fought thy own eternal peace to wound ?

“ Prepare for judgment, oh, my son ! prepare

“ To hear the trumpet's last decisive sound.

“ When

“ When proud presumption claims to be forgiven,
 “ Demanding audience of an injur’d God,
 “ Tho’ Mercy reign the attribute of Heaven,
 “ Still Justice bears the sceptre and the rod.”

That bell again ! oh, how it wounds my heart !
 The train moves on, by mourning Friendship led ;
 My tears will flow : e’en Albert bears his part,
 Melts at the sight, and weeps for Werter dead.

Ill-fated youth ! why, urg’d by wild despair,
 On death’s cold pillow didst thou seek repose ?
 To-morrow’s dawn perhaps had met thee fair,
 To-morrow’s sun dispell’d impending woes.

Were these the precepts thy Redeemer gave?

Were these the precepts which he died to seal?

Did his example point thee to the grave,

Or give thy rashness shadow of appeal?

No; in submission's lowly garb array'd,

Resign'd, obedient to the will of God,

Tho' tempted, scorn'd, abandon'd, and betray'd,

The perfect ways of righteousness he trod.

Not many a pain, nor many a mournful hour,

Not present sufferings, nor the thoughts of past,

Could move his constant mind, or shake his power;

He bore them all; but triumph'd in the last.

When the Eternal said to man,—be free,
 He gave the human mind a will to choose ;
 Plac'd him on earth, endued with liberty,
 And good and evil offer'd to his views.

Cloth'd him with sense exalted and refin'd,
 And form'd his feelings with peculiar care :
 He gave to Reason empire o'er the mind,
 And Conscience fixt as his vicegerent there.

He plac'd Salvation's helmet on his head,
 The sword of Faith appointed to his hand ;
 Virtue's fair shield before the champion spread,
 And arm'd for conquest bid the warrior stand.

Rank'd as the chosen soldier of his will,

What then, oh man! does he require of thee?

What, but his word with meekness to fulfil,

And make thy life with truth's fixt laws agree?

With all the hero then, await the hour

When tried obedience shall be crown'd with praise:

Against desertion God will point his power,

And all the thunder of his vengeance raise.

Turn then, oh man! this great transgression shun:

Strip off from Vice the flimsy veil she wears:

Sure, from her ways we shall affrighted run,

When she in full deformity appears.

Thou, blest Religion! all my soul impress;

Increase my faith; my humble hope increase:

“Thy righteous ways, are ways of pleasantness;”

Yes, thou bright Seraph! “all thy paths are peace.”

Oh, Werter! how my wounded heart deplores

The once impatiently expected hour,

When death should join us on immortal shores,

Safe from the reach of every human power!

Delusive hope! ah, hold my hasty pen!

Alas! he's turn'd apostate to my views.

Yet, it may be—the righteous Judge of men

Will not to sorrow's voice this boon refuse.

To his sad tomb at evening I'll repair,

Kiss the cold ground where Werter's ashes lie :

Then, weeping, breathe to Heaven the fervent prayer,

That Werter yet may mercy find on high.

Yes, Charlotte's prayers shall reach Compassion's throne ;

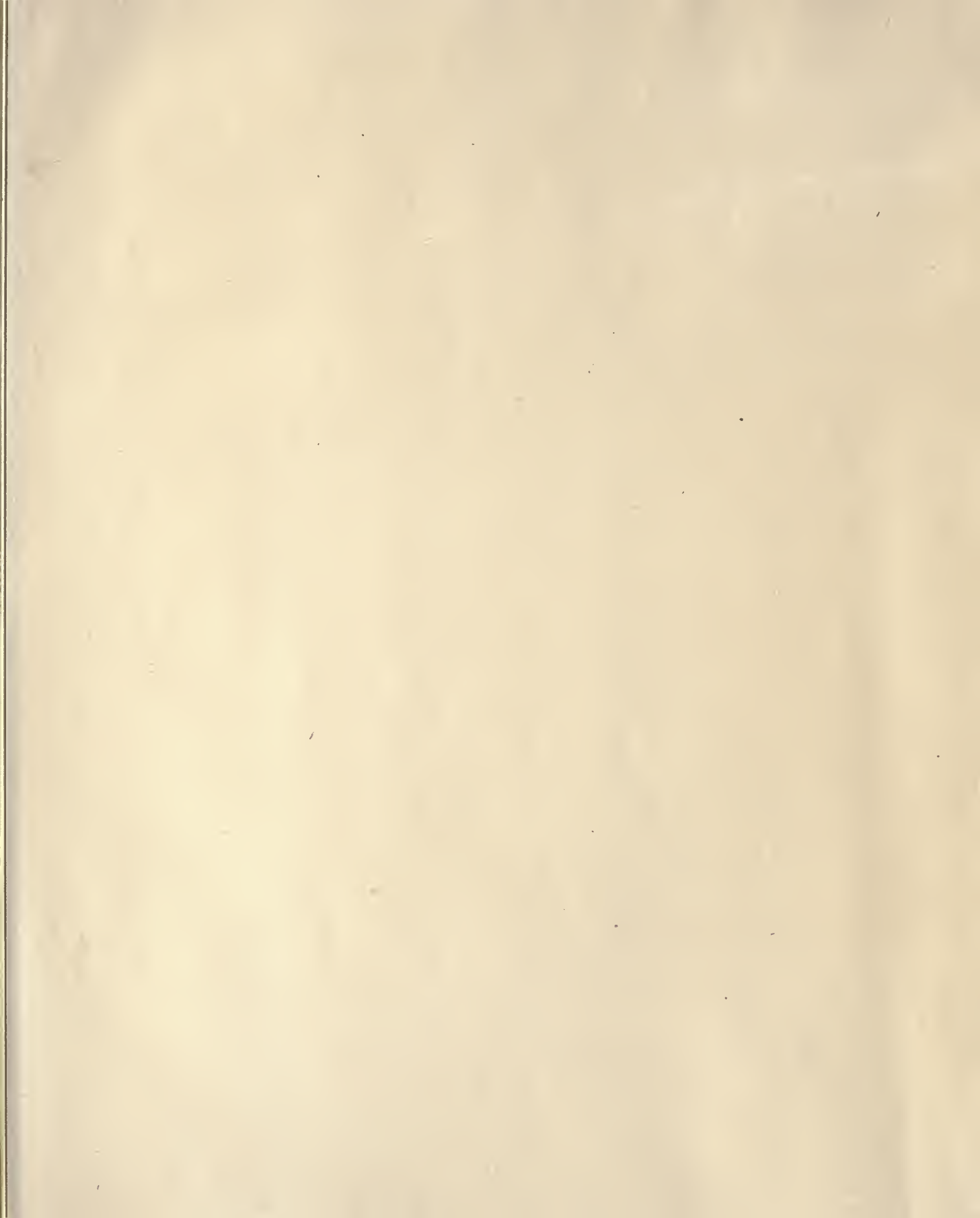
Her sighs to Truth's celestial realms ascend :

Oh, may the humble sacrifice atone

For the lost reason of her desperate friend !

F I N I S.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general
 introduction of the subject, and to a description of the
 various methods which have been employed for the
 purpose of determining the true value of the
 quantity in question. The second part is devoted to
 a detailed account of the various methods which have
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